



## **Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Intergovernmental Relations**

**Date:** June 20, 2013

**To:** Council Vice President Robert Lilligren and Chair Elizabeth Glidden, Committee of the Whole

**Subject: FaegreBD Consulting for continued federal representation services in Washington, D.C.**

**Recommendation: That the proper city officers be authorized to execute Amendment #1 to Contract# C-35752 for continued federal representation services in Washington, D.C. The annual amount will remain the same, \$120,000.**

**Previous Directives:** The city after completing an RFP process entered into a contract with FaegreBD Consulting in April 2012 for 12 months.

### **Department Information**

Prepared by: IGR Staff

Approved by: Gene Ranieri, IGR Director \_\_\_\_\_

Presenters in Committee: Gene Ranieri

### **Reviews**

- Permanent Review Committee (PRC): Approval Yes Date September 11, 2011

### **Financial Impact**

Action is within current department budget.

### **Supporting Information:**

The contract with FaegreBD Consulting (Firm) was for one year. As per the RFP the contract can be extended for up to two years. A one year extension is being recommended due to uncertainty regarding the federal budget, the impacts of sequestration and the adoption of major domestic policy such as immigration reform. The Firm has been engaged to assist in its business with the Congress and federal agencies.

The contract outlined two broad functions – Communication/Information and Advocacy. Both functions include advice and consultation with city officials, other Firm members, federal officials and staff of national municipal organizations.

Among the communication/information activities are meeting with city officials in Washington, D.C, conference calls, notification of available federal grant opportunities, assisting in developing the city's federal agenda, and liaison with federal agencies to provide or obtain information.

Advocacy includes presenting the city's positions and concerns to congressional offices, federal agencies and national municipal organizations, and non-governmental public interest groups focused on such issues as transportation, and housing. Advocacy can take numerous forms and during the term of the contract the Firm has arranged for meetings of city officials with Congressional and federal officials, developing multi-city letters or communications to advance a position and meeting with federal agency officials to present the city's position on such issues as Asian carp, youth violence and housing.

## **Communication/Information**

### **1. Meet With City Officials.**

During the contract year the Firm's representatives met in Washington, D.C., with city council members, the Mayor and city staff during the National League of Cities' Congressional Cities Conference, U.S. Conference of Mayors and at meetings with federal agencies (Economic Development Administration, Housing and Urban Development and members of Congress and congressional staff). The Firm's staff arranged for briefings by U.S. Senate committee staff to brief city council members on transportation and judiciary issues.

Representatives of the Firm also visited the city in September 2012 to meet with elected officials and city staff. As a result of the meetings, the Firm not only was able to provide assistance in amending the federal agenda but also provided advice on policy issues of interest to the city.

### **2. Weekly Conference Calls.**

Approximately 40 weekly conference calls have been completed. The calls are organized by the IGR Office. A fixed time (2PM Wednesday) is scheduled for the conference call which usually lasts 45 minutes. The agenda is distributed to a list of city staff. On occasion, staff is added as issues arise. For example, additional CPED staff was invited on the call for the Asian carp and Fire Department staff has joined on SAFER grant discussions.

In addition to the weekly conference calls, the Firm has arranged for conference calls with city staff on specific issues. IGR staff participates in these calls which included discussions regarding the HUD 108 loan program, HUD's pilot rental housing program, the Department of Justice's youth violence forum and grant related issues with the Economic Development Administration.

### **3. Information on Funding Opportunities And Provide Assistance.**

A major portion of the first year of the contract has been spent on providing information on federal initiatives and obtaining city perspectives on proposed program rules and guidance. This year was unusual in that the Congress failed to adopt a budget and saw the implementation of sequestration. Therefore, federal grant funding has, in most instances, not increased but has been stable or declined. Despite the fiscal condition of the federal government, the Firm has identified funding opportunities related to criminal justice, health, housing and economic development and homeland security. In addition the Firm has provided information on the policies of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) relating to grants management. The city has continued to submit applications to continue federal funding currently received by the city. The Firm has provided guidance on the applications and future funding trends.

**Advocacy (Policy and Resources)**

The following are examples of the Firm's involvement in advocating for the city.

**1. Asian Carp Mitigation.**

The Firm has represented the city at agency meetings regarding the closure of the locks and dams and has in cooperation with the Congressional offices worked on the passage of an amendment to the Senate water bill. The amendment would close the locks if commercial activity in terms of tonnage declines below a certain threshold.

**2. Youth Violence Prevention Forum.**

The City along with four other cities was selected to be included in the Department of Justice's Youth Violence Prevention Forum. The Firm advised city staff on the application criteria and arranged meetings with city staff and DoJ.

**3. Transit.**

Along with representatives of Lockridge Grindal Nauen, the Firm has had several meetings with Congressional staff and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) officials to discuss the city's street car project and obtain guidance regarding the FTA funding process.

**4. Economic Development Administration (EDA).**

The Firm has advocated for the funding of a project located in the city and has worked with EDA staff to explore possible funding sources.